

## **The Birth of Jesus Christ**

### **Matthew 2:1-8**

At the end of Matthew Chapter 1, we see Joseph calling Mary's firstborn son Jesus. The first time the name Jesus is seen in all the Bible is within Matthew Chapter 1. We saw the physical generation of Jesus Christ in the flesh.

We see that Mary is a virgin found with child just as prophecy from the Book of Isaiah 750 years prior tells us. We see that the Savior of the world, Jesus, is about to be born into this world. We are moving into Matthew Chapter 2 now.

#### **""Matthew 2:1-2**

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, 2 Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.""

### **Details of the Birth of Jesus Christ in Matthew and Luke**

As you see, there aren't many details about the birth of Jesus Christ here in Matthew Chapter 2. Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king. We have 4 Gospels in the Bible. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. These 4 Gospels give us details about the first coming of Jesus Christ. We see his birth there in Matthew Chapter 1.

The Gospel of Mark and John do not have any details about the birth of Jesus Christ. Only Matthew and Luke have his birth.

In Matthew, as you see right there, the Bible says, "Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king." We know for sure that Jesus was born in Bethlehem. The Gospel of Luke is the longest Gospel known for its detail. The Gospel of Matthew is close in length to Luke, though.

#### **""Luke 2:1-4**

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. 2 (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) 3 And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. 4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:)"

Mary, at that time, is pregnant with Jesus. Caesar Augustus of the Romans makes a decree or a law that all the world should be taxed. And every one went to his own city to be taxed. Joseph leaves the city of Nazareth in Galilee and heads back to Judaea, to Bethlehem which is called the city of David. He goes there because he was of the house and lineage of David.

## Nazareth to Bethlehem is Not an Easy Journey

Now, this journey from Nazareth of Galilee to Bethlehem of Judaea is not an easy trip. You can put this trip into Google Maps. The trip is about 90 miles. Walking today would take about 34 hours. Driving about 2 hours and 20 minutes. By bike, about 11 hours.



Remember, this is Joseph and Mary, who is pregnant, traveling about 90 miles from Nazareth to Bethlehem. Nazareth is there in the North. Bethlehem is there in the South. You can go on Google Maps, put in that route, and see pictures of what that route looks like today.

In Luke Chapter 2 verse 4, the Bible says that Joseph went UP from Galilee into Judaea. The city of Bethlehem's elevation is 2549' above sea level. The city of Nazareth is 1138' above sea level. So, they definitely had to go up to get to Bethlehem. The elevation difference is 1411 feet.

So, this wasn't an easy journey. And Mary was pregnant. And they weren't going for vacation. They were going to pay taxes. Hey, these people didn't have easy lives with cars. Bethlehem is in the mountains. The terrain all along this journey is rugged going up and down. They worked hard on these journeys. Let me show you a picture.



And that road wasn't there for Joseph and Mary. Hills the entire way. People who are educated in the length of a journey like this for a pregnant woman will say it probably took about 4 days. This is a long and difficult journey.

Many of us, today, wouldn't make it because we aren't accustomed to journey's like that. We would start crying, give up, and quit. All of this to go pay taxes.

**""Luke 2:5-7**

To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. 6 And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. 7 And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.""

**Mary is at The End of Her Pregnancy and Makes the Journey**

We see that Mary is great with child. She is very pregnant. And she still takes this journey with her husband Joseph. Most women wouldn't do this. But Mary was chosen for this, and God knew Mary well. He knew she would go to Bethlehem. There is prophecy that must be fulfilled.

**""Micah 5:2**

But thou, Beth-lehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.""

That was written approximately 700 years or so before Jesus was born in Bethlehem. Jesus is born in a small city, Bethlehem of Judah. Jesus will be the ruler in Israel one day. He will rule on this earth for 1,000 years and Jesus will rule over Israel. The Israel of God are all the people who have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ.

And notice in that prophecy of the birth of Jesus Christ that you see: "Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." Jesus didn't begin to exist when he was born on earth in Bethlehem. He is God. He is eternal. He is everlasting. He came in the flesh to save us. But Jesus already existed long before that. God is everlasting.

Joseph and Mary go through this long journey to Bethlehem while Mary is great with child. She is nearing the end of her pregnancy. While they are there in Bethlehem, Mary delivers her firstborn son.

**""Luke 2:7**

And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.""

Mary was a tough woman. She is a virtuous woman. If you want to know more of what Mary was like, you can read Proverbs Chapter 31. You can see she is different from most women. She took that journey while pregnant. She delivers Jesus her firstborn son. She had other children later. She had additional sons. Jesus was her firstborn son.

She wrapped him in swaddling clothes. She's a good mother. She takes care of her son. She loves Jesus. God chose Mary because she was a good woman. Joseph was a good man. Note that Joseph went all that way to pay his taxes. We are to pay our taxes.

## **Jesus Christ Was Born in a Manger**

I want to focus on this part of the birth of Jesus Christ there where it says that they laid him in a manger because there was no room for them in the inn. They didn't have a place to stay. They didn't live there. They didn't have a home there. There was no room in the inn for Jesus. I want to read you what Jesus is called in Matthew Chapter 2 where we started earlier.

**""Matthew 2:1-2**

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, 2 Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.""

Jesus is called King of the Jews, but Jesus is born in a manger where animals feed. The wise men, probably many more than three, come from the east to Jerusalem.

There are many lies out there about the three wise men. They didn't come to the birth of Jesus. They didn't see Jesus in the manger. The Bible says so later in Matthew Chapter 2. They come and see Jesus in the house as a young child.

Some people have even given them the names of Balthasar, Caspar, and Melchior. The Bible doesn't give them names. The Bible doesn't say there were three of them. The Bible doesn't say they were kings. They came sometime after Jesus was born. We have to simply trust the words of the Bible and not add to the words.

They ask, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews?" Jesus is the King of the Jews. He's born in a manger where animals feed. There was no room for Jesus at the inn.

Jesus is the Son of God and Almighty God himself. Being born in a manger. There was no home for him to be born in there. There was no place for him at the inn. King of the Jews and born in a place where animals feed. He could have been born in a mansion or a palace. But He wasn't. Why is that?

Jesus is humble. He came in the lowest form possible. He came as a helpless baby. God entrusted Joseph and Mary to take care of Jesus. He was always going to be born in Bethlehem in that manger. Mary laid him in that feeding trough for animals.

### **Lifted Up With Pride and Power**

There are many people in this world that love to exercise their power and authority over you. If you haven't noticed, God doesn't do that to you. Jesus doesn't do that to you. He allows you to make your own choices. He's a humble God.

#### **""Philippians 2:5-8**

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: 8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.""

Notice this is a commandment from the Bible to you and I. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." Jesus was equal with God. He is God. There is no one higher than God. Second place isn't even close.

Jesus made himself of no reputation. Hey, let this mind be in you. "For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself." There are lots and lots of lifted up Christians out there. Lots and lots of lifted up leaders in churches who think themselves to be something.

Hey, let that same mind of Jesus be in you. He's God but made himself of no reputation. He took upon him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men. We are servants. We work for other men and women. We work for each other. We are servants. We serve God. It's great to be a servant. The greatest leaders are the greatest servants.

The greatest servant ever is the Lord Jesus Christ. He is God but he was found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and he was obedient unto the death of the cross. People mocked him, spit on him, beat him, whipped him, slashed him, and not a word from Jesus. He took it all.

He was born in a manger. He didn't need all the riches and luxuries of this life. He was humble, meek, and lowly. His birth in a manger shows this. He starts his life on this earth in the most humble way.

**""Matthew 11:29**

Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.""

## **Jesus is Meek and Lowly in Heart**

Learn of Jesus. See how Jesus did things. See how Jesus lived. He is meek and lowly in heart. He is soft and gentle with people. You can see all of these examples. One is the woman taken in adultery. He was easy on her. He has great mercy on all of us. He isn't easily provoked. He's humble, submissive, and not proud.

If anyone has the reasons to be lifted up, proud, and high, it would be the Lord God Almighty. But He isn't. He's meek and lowly.

**""1 Peter 2:21-23**

For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: 22 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: 23 Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: ""

And you see, this is why we read the Bible. This is why we study the Bible. I've been attacked in the last few months. I've had people saying lies about me. People that are Christians.

But what does the Bible say right there? "Leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps." I could fight back. I could tell you all kinds of things about those other people. But the Bible says for me to be different. The Bible tells me to be like Jesus Christ.

"Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." There was no deceit in his mouth. No lies. No railing. No backbiting. "Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again." He was mocked. He had false witnesses against him. He was spit on. And Jesus reviled not again. He took it all. He stayed quiet. That's what I'll do. I'll do my best to follow that example he left us.

## **Jesus Committed Himself to God Who Judges Righteously**

He suffered. He threatened not. What did Jesus do? "He committed himself to him that judgeth righteously." Hey, I will allow God to judge those people. Not me. I will allow God to judge between them and me. God knows the liars. And God will take care of it. And God already is taking care of it.

Jesus set the example for us. He started with his birth. He came just like you and I. Most all of us were born in better places than Jesus. His life was tougher than ours. Joseph and Mary had it tougher than us. Jesus had it far tougher than we do. Remember that. He showed us how to do things.

Serve people. Don't act like you're better. We don't need the seats in high places. We don't need to be called by titles.

**""Matthew 23:5-8**

But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, 6 And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, 7 And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi. 8 But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren.""

We don't need the uppermost rooms at feasts. We don't need the chief seats. We don't show you how much better we are than you. We don't need you to call us by our titles. Jesus Christ is our Master. We are his servants.

We know where we came from. We came from the dust of this earth. We need to be humble. Isaiah 40 verse 4 says: "Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low."

## **The Humility of Jesus Christ is Seen at the Birth of Christ**

As a child of God, keep in mind the humility of Jesus Christ. The Bible commands us to be clothed with humility. God resists the proud and gives grace to the humble.

Follow in the footsteps of Jesus every day. When you have that fleshly urge to be proud and lifted up, remember that your Lord and Savior Jesus Christ was born in a manger where animals feed. He's setting the example for you. God is a God of the humble, meek, and lowly. He is not the God of the proud, lifted up, and high people.

Just remember how Jesus came. And remember who he is. He is God. He is lowly, meek, and humble. He's from above yet he is lowly.

We are not from above. We know where we came from. It's not from above. None of us.

**""Genesis 3:19**

In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.""

We all came from the dust of this earth, and unto dust shalt thou return.

**""Genesis 18:27**

And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes:""

Abraham was lifted up by God because you can see the humility of Abraham. He says I am speaking to the Lord and I am but dust and ashes. Go to God with humility and lowliness. Don't lift yourself up. Don't think that you know more than God. Be lowly like Jesus. Every valley shall be exalted and every mountain shall be made low. Be the valley. Don't be the mountain.

Remember the birth of Jesus Christ.

Let's pray.